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SUBJECT: RWANDA -- MONTHLY POLITICAL ROUNDUP

REF: A. KIGALI 289
[1](#)B. KIGALI 207

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[1](#)1. (U) In this edition:

- Kagame Castigates Party Officials at RPF Political Bureau Meeting
- Anti-Corruption Campaign Continues -- Prosecutor General Readies New Cases
- New Political Parties Have Trouble Organizing
- Nkunda Loses Round Three

Kagame Tough On RPF Cadres

[1](#)2. (C) During a May 17 meeting of the Rwanda Patriotic Front's (RPF) several-hundred-member political bureau, President Kagame (who is also RPF Chairman) heavily criticized RPF cadres holding government positions who "abused their offices to line their pockets." He also harshly called to task party members who "shielded rather than denounced" those corrupt and abusive RPF operatives. Participants in the proceedings told us the President focused his ire on several prominent members of the government: Rwanda Revenue Authority Commissioner General Mary Baine (Baine is also the sister of Foreign Minister Museminali and the wife of Colonel Tom Byabagamba, head of the Presidential Guard), Ombudsman Tito Rutaremara, Senator Joseph Karemera, and Minister of State for Education Theoneste Mutsindashyaka. Baine heads the RPF's task force on illicit acquisition of wealth. Kagame criticized her for the task force's lack of progress identifying malefactors within the party. Senator Karemera reportedly came in for criticism when he questioned the "turnover" of party operatives in government positions, a remark Kagame apparently took as questioning the RPF's policy emphasis on honesty and integrity, and the recent dismissal of officials for corruption. Rutaremara faced criticism similar to Baine; he did not do enough as Ombudsman to thwart illegal activity. Mutsindashyaka reportedly was on the receiving end of several caustic remarks by the President regarding his previous term as Eastern Provincial Governor, where several construction contracts are now under review for corrupt practices.

13. (C) Comment. Kagame routinely upbraids his fellow RPF and government officials in various fora, including for inefficiency and tolerance of corrupt practices. A frequent Kagame ploy is to aim his criticism at those he trusts. By doing so, he purportedly shows the rank and file that none are above reproach. The goal of this method of instruction is supposedly to energize listeners to support his various agendas. Kagame's penchant for sharp criticism of government officials and senior RPF cadre, in full view of their colleagues, disquiets others. They see the public embarrassment as heavy-handed and a way to keep those in Kagame's inner circle off-balance and in-check. End comment.

Anti-Corruption Campaign Continues, Says Prosecutor General

14. (C) Prosecutor General Martin Ngoga (strictly protect) told pol/econ counselor on May 20 that he was conducting a number of major anti-corruption investigations centered on large construction contracts awarded by various government entities. A generalized practice of inflating such contracts exists, he said, and the National Public Prosecution Service Q(NPPS) would move vigorously to prosecute offenses. His office has also informed the Ministry of Finance (which houses all major development project documentation in its public investments office), that the NPPS requires all contracts with cost overruns of 20 percent or more to be forwarded for examination. Ngoga said the NPPS is combing through customs service files, following indications that many construction contracts involve over-invoicing of imported materials, or fictitious claims for construction materials never brought into the country.

15. (C) Ngoga confided he had his sights set on the Minister of State for Education, Theoneste Mutsindashyaka, for corrupt behavior during his previous stint as Governor of the Eastern Province involving the construction of an office complex. Ngoga also raised the recent arrest of Kalisa Mupende, Director of Finance at the Presidency, for embezzlement. Ngoga said President Kagame was bitterly disappointed in Mupende, as Kagame had nurtured Mupende's career. Ngoga continued to update Kagame on his office's anti-corruption efforts, and the President continued to urge him to follow corruption wherever it led.

Two New Political Formations Face Continuing Difficulties

16. (SBU) The Ideal Social Party (PSI) has faced continuing problems in attempting to register as a political party with the Ministry Of Local Government (MINILOC). Having decided to change its name, which conflicted with a previously registered NGO (ref B), it now calls itself the Social Party - Inberakuti ("those who stand for the truth"). It twice attempted to hold a second constituent assembly to rectify apparent errors in its first assembly in February (those "errors" included failure to properly identify those attending the assembly, and electing less than thirty percent of women to party leadership positions). Each time police arrived to disperse those meetings.

17. (SBU) MINILOC officials told us that the party organizers incorrectly notified local authorities, by copying them on notification letters to MINILOC rather than writing directly to the district governments. MINILOC has advised the party leadership of this "error." Party founder Bernard Ntaganda told us he plans a fourth attempted party assembly based on that direction. He noted he has continued having difficulty finding a notary public willing to attest and verify identities, as required for constituent assemblies. According to Ntaganda, they are afraid to be associated with a new political formation.

18. (SBU) A second political grouping, known as Republican Democratic Alliance/Legacy of Agathe Uwilingiyimana (ADRUIUA), has begun the registration process. (Note: Agathe

Uwilingiyimana was the moderate Hutu Prime Minister killed at the start of the 1994 genocide by Hutu extremists). Their initial attempt in late April to hold a constituent assembly failed when the Mayor of Nyarugenge District (mistakenly) required them to seek authorization rather than simply inform local authorities of their intention to meet -- he canceled their proposed meeting. MINILOC officials apparently assisted ADRUIUA organizers in correcting the Mayor, and ADRUIUA held an assembly in early May. However, ADRUIUA, too, has had difficulty obtaining the services of a notary public.

¶9. (C) Comment. These two new political formations may suffer organizational deaths from a thousand (procedural) cuts. Assemblies require time, money, and the personal commitment of average citizens; neither of these small and unrecognized groupings has limitless monetary or human resources. Niggling notification requirements for meetings,

the unwillingness of notaries public to attend assemblies, and the prospect of police shooing people away from meetings make their registration prospects uncertain. End comment.

Nkunda Loses Again

¶10. (SBU) On May 21, a High Court in Ruhengeri faced the question of whether Nkunda's legal team had properly named the GOR as a defendant in the legal action to secure his release (the High Court had previously overturned an intermediate Gisenyi court ruling that it had no jurisdiction over the action). The High Court ruled that Nkunda's team must return to the Gisenyi Intermediate Court. The judge ruled Nkunda's team must refile its application, and name a specific government official responsible for the detention, rather than the State of Rwanda. Nkunda's lawyers told us they are considering how to file this application, and who exactly they should name, not being entirely sure who has custody of Nkunda among the various Rwandan security services. There is no deadline for the refiling of the new application.

¶11. (C) Comment. Nkunda's legal team continues its (so far fruitless) efforts to secure an admission in court from the Rwandan state that it has its client in custody. The odd stipulation so far imposed upon Nkunda's lawyers by these various courts, that his lawyers must discover who has possession of Nkunda and ascertain why he is held, turns any normal understanding of habeas corpus on its head. End comment.

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